



# Pope John Catholic Primary School

Commonwealth Avenue  
London  
W12 7QR

Date of inspection: 21 May 2014

## A. Classroom Religious Education

**What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?**

**Overall Grade 2**

The overall effectiveness of religious education is Good. The school, through its self evaluation, has recognised its need to review its scheme of work, in particular the effective and consistent use of Scripture. They have also planned to appoint a substantial leader for religious education. The designated governor for religious education is well informed, and keeps up to date on the provision and progress of religious education. The school fully meets the requirements in the Curriculum Directory, including the 10% coverage. The provision is richly resourced and opportunities are taken to link the religious education programme within the liturgical cycle. This is also evident in the records of the weekly assemblies linked to the "Wednesday Word" and the Gospel for that week. Pupils and parents who met the inspectors were able to describe how the school supports and guides the progress of the pupils through their religious literacy.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

**What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?**

**Overall Grade 1\***

The overall effectiveness of this Catholic school is Outstanding. The school fully meets the 10% requirement for religious education. The prayer and worship of the school is central to all that it provides. Pupils are empowered to lead prayer and worship and are excellent ambassadors for their school. They are very proud of their school, demonstrating a maturity and confidence which belies their age. The school has developed extremely strong links with the parish and the community beyond the school. The Parish Priest is a welcome and regular visitor to the school, and actively supports all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. The pupils are encouraged to act responsibly, to understand their responsibility for social justice and its impact on 'human flourishing.' The school works in close partnership with the Deanery and the Diocese, whereby their membership of the West London Teaching Schools Alliance, (WLTSA), has Pope John School, as its main 'hub' school for the Catholic arm of the Alliance. The pro-active governing body includes the designated governor for the Catholic life of the school, who is a recently retired catholic primary headteacher, with expertise and knowledge to support governing body evaluations and discussions. The leadership team, in partnership with the governing body, is fully aware of their ecclesial responsibility to the mission of the Church.

## Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent one day in school, visited 8 lessons and an assembly, and carried out 5 interviews with school staff, pupils and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, discussion with local clergy, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The Inspection of Pope John Catholic Primary School, in White City, was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

## Inspection Team

Mrs. Tina Cleugh  
Ms Catherine Bryan

Lead Inspector  
Associate Inspector

## Description of School

The school is a one form entry, with a bulge class in year three, in the LA of Hammersmith and Fulham and the locality of white City. The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Fatima, White City and St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, East Acton. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99.7%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 0.2% and from other Faiths 0.1%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 77%.

There are 270 pupils on roll, with 9 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average. There is a well above average rate of families claiming free school meals. 107 pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

Telephone: 0208 743 9428  
e-mail address: head@popejohnrclbhf.sch.uk

DFE Number: 205 3645  
URN Number: 100355

Headteacher: Mrs. Gillian Wickham  
Chair of Governors:

Date of previous inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008

## Key for inspection grades:

<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</i>
<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

## **A. Classroom Religious Education**

*How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?*

### **What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?**

The school has been implementing the assessment for learning, (AfL), strategies, now being applied to the new scheme, as for other core subjects. This includes the pupils' self-assessment and peer marking skills being developed.

### **How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?**

**Grade 2**

The school is meeting the 10% requirement of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, in the delivery of religious education across the phases. They have also ensured their plans are mapped to the Curriculum Directory. The school has introduced the scheme, 'Come and See' from years one to six and continue to use 'The Way the Truth and the Life in Foundation Stage.

There was evidence during the inspection of good support and guidance to pupils with additional needs and in some cases very good support to pupils with more significant additional needs.

The classes also learn about the lives and impact of their designated 'Saints.' There is evidence of how the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the lives of their 'Saints' is progressively developed across the phases. There is evidence of a range of cross-curricular links in religious education, including some examples of quality art work, prayer gardens and links to the liturgical cycle. The school has generously resourced the range of artefacts for delivery of religious education, and has recognised and accepted the need for Bibles to be allocated for use in all year groups, to develop the use and understanding of the importance of scripture in religious education.

### **Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education**

**Grade 2**

The school uses the 'Target Tracker' system to record levels of attainment in religious education.

This is updated termly and now provides evidence of the rate of progress of pupils, year on year.

This information and progress in religious education is now shared with class teachers on transition each academic year, as for other core subjects. The school has identified that the assessments taken by teachers at the end of each topic is a key area for ongoing development, to ensure effective moderation against the levels of attainment. This particularly applies to the higher levels in both key stage one and key stage two. They also realise the importance of the effective use of Scripture, as relevant to the delivery of the topics in all year groups.

The school has links through the Deanery and also attends the Diocesan training networks to ensure moderation against the levels is accurate. This is acknowledged in the school's self-evaluation, that a review of the new scheme will be taken at the end of the summer term, to ensure effective attainment of pupils in religious education.

## **The quality of teaching**

### **Grade 2**

The typicality of teaching is Good overall. The lessons observed indicate how the school is using the new 'Come and See' scheme. The school has agreed the need to focus on the use of Scripture. Pupils from the Foundation Stage were exploring how they can talk about God as their special helper and the special gifts they have received from God. This led the pupils to reflect on the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our Church. In Key Stage One, the pupils explored the theme of forgiveness and some good examples were given of how Jesus helps us to forgive. This included reference to the key stage two assembly on how we can demonstrate our discipleship, through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In these lessons there was very good examples of how pupils with additional needs were guided and supported.

There was a good example of how the pupils were guided, to explore the parable of the 'Good Shepherd.' The response from the pupils included links to "how Jesus lay down his own life for us," which led to the liturgical feasts of Easter. The effective use of questioning in some upper key stage two lessons, empowered pupils to reflect and explore their understanding of what Jesus did for people, using biblical text from St. Matthew and St. Luke's Gospels.

The learning evident across the school, from work in the books, discussions with pupils, and senior staff, indicate that there is a need for consistent use of scripture to be planned, including the use appropriate key questioning, which will impact on pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment. Teachers are gaining in confidence and the leadership team is committed to further developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.

## **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education**

### **Grade 2**

The leadership of religious education has changed in recent years. The school has identified in its self-evaluation its intention to appoint a substantial leader of religious education for the beginning of the new academic year.

The Headteacher has been covering the role of leader of religious education since the promotion of the previous leader to headship at the beginning of the academic year. She has been supporting and guiding the staff to meet the requirements of the religious education programme, including preparation for the incumbent leader. The school has also planned for four more colleagues to complete the CCRS in their efforts to improve the skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence of staff. The designated governor for religious education is kept fully abreast of all aspects of the provision.

## **What should the school do to improve further in classroom religious education?**

The school has identified within its self-evaluation the need to:-

- appoint a leader of religious education, to lead and manage their action plan in religious education for the future
- focus upon the knowledge and skills for newly qualified and new staff to develop their moderation skills and confidence, to plan towards the sustained higher levels of attainment, against the agreed understanding in religious education
- Ensure that the effective and appropriate use of Scripture is consistently planned across the phases in the delivery of religious education

## **B. The Catholic life of the school**

*How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?*

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

There were no issues during the last inspection, related to the Catholic life of the school

### **The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget**

**Grade I\***

The school fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference to deliver 10% of the timetable for Religious Education. The school has ensured high status and priority is given to the delivery of religious education and the Catholic Life. The budget allocation for religious education mirrors that for literacy and numeracy. The Leader of religious education is a member of the school leadership team. The Governing Body works in close liaison with the senior leadership team. They have a designated governor for religious education and the catholic life of the school. The designated governor met with the inspectors and described how the school improvement priorities are planned and evaluated on a termly basis. She is kept fully informed of all key events and celebrations. She visits the school regularly including attending assemblies, Mass and special liturgical and other events. The Headteacher report informs the governors of the cycle of training and how the school is currently supporting three members of staff to gain their CCRS, (Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies), accreditation. During the inspection, it was possible to see at first hand, the variety and high quality of the resources used across the phases. The range of artefacts, crosses, tapestries, banners, and the beautifully set out prayer garden, in dedication to Our Lady of Fatima, is worthy of note.

### **The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community.**

**Grade I\***

The centrality of worship and prayer is a strength of the school, throughout the liturgical cycle. The year group 'prayer books' provide evidence of the how pupil initiate spontaneous prayer relating to the messages of Jesus supporting the sick and vulnerable. Pupils take home their prayer books to use at home with their families. Some excellent examples of these included family prayers for victims of the Philippine disaster, thanking God for their skills and talents. The older pupils are encouraged to reflect on their favourite Bible story. There is photographic evidence of the variety of liturgical celebrations, including Advent, Lent, classroom Saints, Holy Week, Easter and more recently their "international" day of celebration for the canonisation of St. John XXIII, their school patron. This has brought great joy, pride and excitement for the whole school community. The Wednesday Word, distributed weekly, re-visited in the Monday assemblies, indicates the consistency in how the pupils are guided through the meaning of the Gospel.

The entrance to the school reminds the visitor at once that they are entering 'holy ground'. Their Prayer Garden, dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, houses the year group planters, depicting each class allocated Saint, whose feast-day is celebrated in Church, for that class, with Mass. The Parish Priest and his curate are regular visitors to the school, who attend the weekly assemblies, welcoming pupils to Mass, weekly. The school has also developed its links with their other Parish, St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, whereby their Parish Priest welcomes the pupils to the Church, and visits the school regularly. The outstanding key stage two assembly, on the 'Gifts of the Holy Spirit,' was

praised by the Parish Priest, followed by a solemn blessing for them to, 'go forth' using these gifts and talents. The long narrations, spoken articulately and with confidence, demonstrated the range of ability levels, ensuring all pupils were fully included. Music and singing is given great status. The music specialist guides and enhances the liturgical worship through the use of percussion, and wind instruments, to a very high standard indeed. The pupils composed their own "Rainfall" song, within a collation, developed on to a CD, for parents.

The high cultural diversity and inclusiveness, is celebrated in a variety of ways, including their annual international day of sharing their cultural uniqueness, in their national dress, including the bidding prayers in their own languages. Members of the school and local community guide the pupils through Black History month events and the work of CAFOD.

The 'prayer group' parents, who met with the inspectors, spoke glowingly of the richness of the prayer life of their children, how they are encouraged to "grow in their faith" and are given 'a voice' in how the school prays as a community.

### **The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.**

#### **Grade I\***

The pupils are fully aware of their role and responsibility in their 'call to justice.' The groups who met the inspectors were very keen to outline the many ways they respond to the needs of those less off than themselves, locally, nationally and globally. They were animated in their descriptions of the many ways the school plans to support others. The generous fundraising, active participation in initiatives, includes sending supplies, resources, clothes and other relevant items to their contact school, Bucandala Elementary School, in the Philippines. This is an example of their response to the call of the gospels. They have an annual cycle of fundraising including, CAFOD, Good Shepherd Appeal, cake sale for cancer research, and the Catholic Children's Society. Pupils are encouraged to 'flourish,' they understand that they have a responsibility to respond to the call to justice and fairness in our world. They are encouraged by staff, through their access to decision making, to have a pro-active involvement in planning and delivering their rich range of events, fund-raising initiatives and participation in whole school and parish community celebrations.

The pupils hold a range of roles of responsibility in the day to day life of the school.. They see the needs of the younger pupils as paramount, to ensure they are supported and guided to follow the rules of the school. When asked about how they feel safe, it was very clear that such incidents of bullying or racism "would just not happen, and if it did the teachers would sort it out straight away". The behaviour of the pupils is exemplary. Their movement, in and around the school, is polite, courteous and orderly. They are motivated in their learning, which was consistently evident throughout the day and during lesson observations.

The younger pupils interviewed were articulate in their responses to describing how they care for and with each other. They are sensitive to each others' needs, demonstrating a strong sense of caring, for one another. They are very proud of their school. They fully appreciate the extra - curricular activities, how they act as 'play leaders' for the younger pupils. They listed with enthusiasm, their involvement in their clubs and the varied events, arranged by the school on their behalf.

### **Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf;**

#### **Grade I\***

The triple partnership between home, school and parish is vibrant. The response to the diocesan questionnaire, received from 40% of parents, with very high 98%y indicating the value and appreciation of the parents and carers for all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Some of the

positive comments are summarised through the following excerpts, include:- “we are blessed to have such a headteacher, who is open, available and our pupils are developing a very strong faith”, “excellent school that upholds a good Catholic ethos”, “this is a truly inspiring school and gives our children the nurturing to take their place in our world as confident adults with Catholic values”, “Christianity and Catholic values are at the forefront of this school’s life. “

The interview with the Parish Priest, confirmed the way the school supports the ongoing faith and spiritual development of the pupils, where he said, “it is most humbling to sit in on the school council and hear the pupil’s views, their moral sense is very clear.” He has a presence in the school, and is working in close collaboration with the staff to support, in particular, those pupils with significant additional needs especially in Church on Sundays, as an extension of the support they receive in school. He spoke warmly of the “depth and essence of community, which is woven, like a stick of rock,” through the whole school community. This includes how the balance in the weekly rewards assembly is “encouraging pupils and also for them to aspire.”

The Governing Body is fully involved in all Diocesan initiatives, training and events. They are fully committed to the ecclesial role of the school in the mission of the Church.

Their membership of the West London Teaching Schools Alliance, (WLTSA), as the Catholic arm of the Alliance, provides a wide range of opportunities for Continuing Professional Development

The school offers its premises on a weekly basis to support the parish catechetical programmes, including the preparation of pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and their First Holy Communion. The school Hall is also used regularly for the parish events, such as bingo and meetings.

The school meets regularly with the Deanery and diocesan network groups. This year, the school hosted the pan Deanery Mass for staff and governors. The school works in close liaison with the Diocesan Advisor, who is a regular visitor to the school.

## **The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.**

### **Grade I\***

The Headteacher’s strong and dynamic leadership has inspired the growth of the school over many years. The Mission Statement, “We aim for excellence with God at the Centre of all that we think, do and say,” informs all aspects of the Catholic life of the school and its ongoing development. It underpins the day to day experiences for all members of the school and its community.

The school is supporting three members of staff with their CCRS accreditation through the WLTSA. The Headteacher ensures that all staff and governors have opportunities to attend the wide range of training led by the Diocese. She empowers colleagues across the phases to develop their skills and through this, lead to succession planning for the future.

The Headteacher is strongly and actively supported by her Governing Body, led effectively by the Chair of Governors. In the meeting with the inspectors, the chair of governors described the pro-active involvement of governors, how their designated roles support the ongoing improvement and development of the school. This includes its impending major build to expand to two forms of entry. This strong team of governors ensure they have opportunities to reflect on the school improvement agenda, with their annual day off site to guide the way forward each academic year. The chair and designated governor spoke of how the headteacher termly report, “has the Catholic life of the school as its first point which drives all else in the school.” They both commented upon how the “Catholic life is alive and thriving”.

## **What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?**

The school has identified through their self-evaluation, (SEF), that they will be:-

- Developing the current Prayer Group of parents to extend it to the pupils
- Developing their weekly Wednesday Word to ‘Lectio Divina’ style of reflection with pupils and adults
- Carry out their planned ‘Summer Retreat’ as an annual event